



Rurouni Kenshin

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Nobuhiro Watsuki

volume

3



和月伸宏

NOBUHIRO WATSUKI



PACKING IT ON.

HAVING HAD NO TIME FOR EXERCISE, IT'S TO BE EXPECTED ...REALLY, CAN'T BE HELPED, BUT.... WHAT'S WORSE IS, BECAUSE I'VE BEEN SO BUSY THERE'S BEEN NO TIME EVEN TO SHAVE, EVERYONE I KNOW IS TREATING ME LIKE YOU SEE ABOVE.

THE GOAL FOR THIS YEAR, THEN, IS TO DIET, AND TO REMEMBER TO SHAVE. THAT, AND GIVING RUROUNI KENSHIN MY ALL, OF COURSE! I SO-O-O WANNA PLAY SHIN (NEW) SAMURAI SPIRITS, BUT... (SHAPE-UP! PUNISHMENT!! KRACK!!)

Rurouni Kenshin, which has found fans not only in Japan but around the world, first made its appearance in 1992, as an original short story in Japan's **Weekly Shonen Jump Special**. Later rewritten and published as a regular, continuing **Jump** series in 1994, **Rurouni Kenshin** ended serialization in 1999 but continued in popularity, as evidenced by the 2000 publication of **Yahiko no Sakabatô** ("Yahiko's Reversed-Edge Sword") in Japan's **Weekly Shonen Jump**. His most current work, **Busô Renkin** ("Armored Alchemist"), began publication this June, also in Japan's **Jump**.

RUROUNI KENSIN VOL. 3
The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition

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PARENTAL ADVISORY

Rurouni kenshin is rated T+ for older teen and is recommended for ages 16 and up. This volume contains realistic violence, language, and alcohol and tobacco usage.



SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

Rurouni Kenshin™

MEIJI SWORDSMAN ROMANTIC STORY

Vol. 3: A REASON TO ACT



STORY AND ART BY
NOBUHIRO WATSUKI

C
A
S
T

Takeda Kanryū

Once he was a *hitokiri*, an assassin, called *Battōsai*. His name was legend among the *Ishin Shishi* or pro-imperialist "patriot" warriors who launched the Meiji era.

Now Himura Kenshin is a *ruromai*, a wanderer, who carries a reversed-edge *sakabatō* blade to prohibit himself from killing.

Having rescued the Kamiya dojo from the hoax of a "fake Battōsai," Kenshin's decided to stay on at the dojo for a while.



武田 観柳



四乃 森蒼紫

Shinomori Aoshi

THUS FAR

After losing all its students, the Kamiya dojo and its "*Kasshin-ryū*" sword style is taking its first steps toward revival. Kenshin brings in *Myōjin Yahiko*, son of an ex-samurai rescued from the *yakuza*, and also *Sagara Sanosuke*, who gave up a life as a fighter-for-hire due to Kenshin's example.

Earlier tonight, Kenshin is dragged to a gambling den by Sanosuke. There they learn that one of Sanosuke's gambling buddies is dead because of opium use. Suddenly, *Takani Megumi* bursts in, asking for Kenshin's protection from the private army of Takeda Kanryū...for reasons apparently having something to do with the drug....

緋村 剣心

(人斬り 抜刀斎)



Himura Kenshin
(Hitokiri Battōsai)

明神 弥彦



Myōjin Yahiko

神谷 薫



Kamiya Kaoru

高荷 恵



Takani Megumi

相楽 左之助



Sagara Sanosuke

新選組 剣心

仲 宏

CONTENTS

Rurouni Kenshin

Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story

BOOK THREE: A REASON TO ACT

ACT 16

Megumi, Kanryū, and...

7

ACT 17

The Oniwabanshū Strike

27

ACT 18

Team Kenshin

47

ACT 19

Daughter of Aizu

66

ACT 20

A Reason to Act

85

ACT 21

The Storm Breaks

104

ACT 22

Attack on Kanryū Mansion

125

END-OF-VOLUME SPECIAL (2)

RUROUNI

MEIJI SWORDSMAN ROMANTIC STORY

145





KENSHIN
AND SANO
ARE OUT
PRETTY
LATE...



Act 16

Megumi, Kanryū, and...

WE'RE
SORRY
WE'RE
LATE.

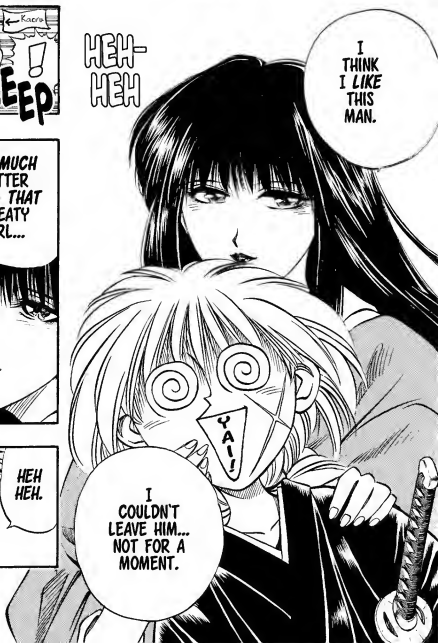
仲月
和宏







HEH-
HEH





HAVE
YOU THE
RIGHT
TO SAY
THAT??

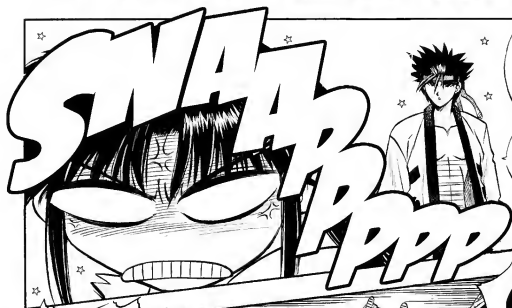
YOU
DON'T
SEEM TO BE
KEN-SAN'S
LOVER.

TEH

OH,
WHY IS
THAT?



NO! YOU
CAN'T DO
THAT!!



DON'T
TEASE
HER TOO
MUCH.

SHE'S
A
SIMPLE
GIRL.

ALL
OF YOU.
OUT!!

GET.
OUT.

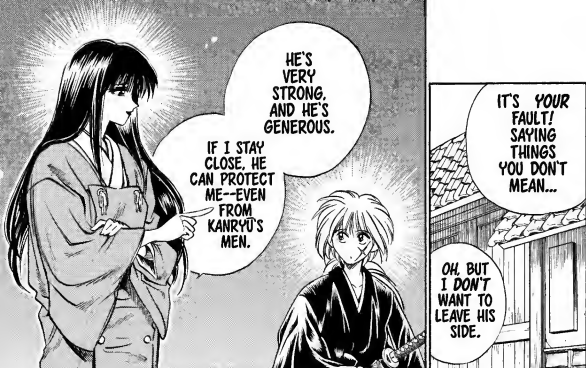
DROOO

OOOOH

INDEED.

SHEESH.









THOUGHT YOU WERE TAKING GIN AND THE OTHERS TO THE DOCTOR.

HEY, SHU.

LOOKED ALL OVER...

I FOUND YOU.

--YOU GOTTA COME WITH ME!

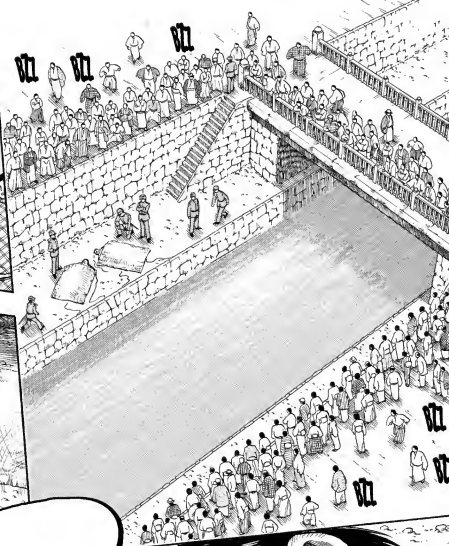
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE--

YEAH. THEY'LL ALL BE FINE. THEIR LIVES AREN'T IN ANY DANGER...

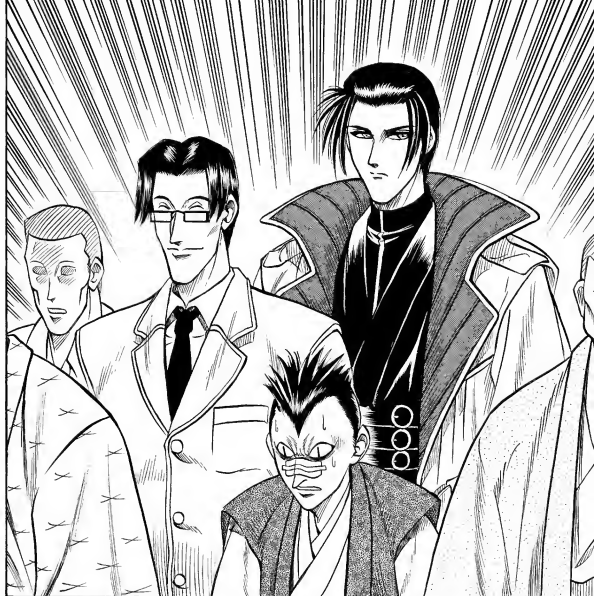
GOOD, GOOD.

KAMIYA KASSHIN-RYU KENJUTSU DOJO

神谷流心流
剣道道場











◀ READ THIS WAY ▶



AND SO...

...I WILL
TAKE
THAT TO
HEART.

NO
MORE
FAILURES.
DO YOU
HEAR
ME?

YOU'LL
BE GIVEN
TWO
HELPERS,
BESHIMI.



IS
THAT
RIGHT?

A FINE
THING, TO
FEEL ONE CAN
AFFORD TO
GIVE SECOND
CHANCES.



AH, BUT
WHEN THE
TRASH IS
TAKEN OUT,
ONE FEELS
SO FRESH...

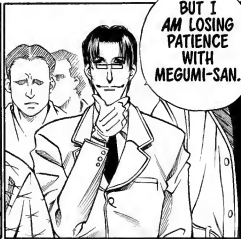
IT IS.
I'M TOO
MUCH THE
INDUSTRIALIST,
MYSELF...

I CAN'T
FEEL FINISHED
TILL THE
WASTE HAS
BEEN DISPOSED
OF.





MY
PRECIOUS
HEN WHO
LAYS THE
GOLDEN
EGG...





SO HE
HIRED
A
FORMER
HEAD--

THE
PRIVATE
ARMY WASN'T
ENOUGH. WHAT
KANRYŪ
WANTED WAS
ONIWABANSHŪ.



Oniwabanshū

An elite group of *onmitsu* (spies of the Edo period, now known as "ninja" or "shinobi") who protected from the shadows the castles and estates of generals and shōgun. Because their task was so crucial, only the ninja most skilled in combat were called to serve.

...SHINOMORI
AOSHI!

AND,
JUST BEFORE
MEIJI, THE ONE
WHO AT THE
TENDER AGE OF
15 BECAME THE
OKASHIRA OR HEAD
OF EDO CASTLE'S
ONIWABANSHŪ...



THIS ONE
COULD NOT
SAY, BUT HE
SEEMS MORE LIKE
THE PROBLEM
THAN HIS
EMPLOYER.

AND
SOMEONE
LIKE THAT IS
WORKING UNDER
KANRYŪ...
WHY??

UP
AGAINST A
CROOKED
INDUSTRIALIST
AND AN
INFAMOUS
ONIWABANSHŪ...!

THERE'S
NO WAY WE
CAN ABANDON
MEGUMI-DONO
NOW.

The Secret Life of Characters (8) —Oniwabanshū • Beshimi—

As a character largely created on-the-spot, I can't say there's much here in the way of a motif. The truth is that, when Watsuki first discussed the "Megumi Arc" with his editor, the opinion was expressed that having a swordsman of Kenshin's caliber fighting a group of punk-thugs still coming into their first facial hair mi-i-ght not make for the most epic of manga. Enter the Oniwabanshū—a real, historic entity—soon made over into onmitsu or ninja, with the remaining details to be fleshed out as the story progressed.

The first of them, Beshimi, was not intended as a stand-alone character, but as a taste of things to come. Without a personality already sketched out for him, he turned out kind of timid...although, as you read further in the story, you'll begin to see another side of him (which I'm going to keep secret, for now).

As mentioned, Beshimi's kind of an "as-you-go" character and so there's no design motif. One thing, though, was that aside from Aoshi, what I wanted for the Oniwabanshū was a variety of shapes and temperaments. Thus, he ended up shorter in stature than Kenshin. It may in fact be his shortness and his timidity that's garnered him his own little group of fans, people who write me saying, "Beshimi KAWAII (Beshimi is cute)!!!" Not too sure how to feel about that one....



和伸
月宏

Act 17
The
Oniwabanshū
Strike







...THESE
PEOPLE
HAVEN'T
GOT A
CHANCE.

IF THE
ONIWABANSHŪ
MAKE A
SERIOUS MOVE...



I CAN'T STAY HERE
FOR LONG. THE BEST
CHANCE I'VE GOT IS
TO RUN AWAY IN THE
CONFUSION OF BATTLE.



KREE



IT'S UNWORTHY
OF THE NAME
KAMIYA KASSHIN-
RYŪ.

YOU
SHOULDN'T
EAVESDROP.



THEN,
MEGUMI-
DONO.
YOU--

THAT'S
ALL I
HAVE TO
SAY!!

B-
BUMP

B-
BUMP

B-
BUMP

B-
BUMP

B-
BUMP

B-
BUMP



BUT-BUT-BUT-BUT-BUT
THEY'VE BEEN ALONE
IN THE ROOM EVER
SINCE THEY CAME BACK!

VROOOOON



IT'S
KENSIN'S
NATURE.



THEN
WHY-Y-Y
...?

PAT
PAT

IT'S ALL
RIGHT. NOTHING
TO BE AFRAID
OF. THERE,
THERE.

HOO HOO
BOO BOO

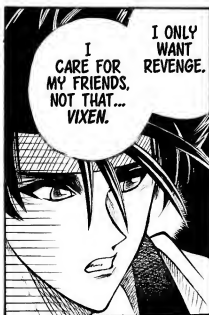


NOT
EVEN
CLOSE.

AND YOU,
SANOSUKE
?



ESPE-
CIALLY
WOMEN
AND
CHILDREN.



I
CARE FOR
MY FRIENDS,
NOT THAT...
VIXEN.

I ONLY
WANT
REVENGE.



YOU
DON'T
SAY.



THE
RUROUNI
CAN'T LEAVE
A PERSON
IN TROUBLE
ALONE.

HE'S
STRONG
WITH SWORDS...
BUT WEAK
AGAINST
PEOPLE.





THIS TIME
YOU'LL BE
PROTECTED,
THAT'S A
SWORN
OATH.

THERE
WON'T BE
THE SAME
MISTAKE
THIS ONE
MADE WITH
JIN-E.

.....!



I
HEARD
THAT...

KENSHIN.

!?



HEH

SO FOR A
WHILE, JUST
PRETEND THAT
NOTHING'S
GOING ON!

HEH
HEH
HEH.



BUT WHEN
IT'S ALL
OVER, YOU
HAD BETTER
EXPLAIN.

...ALL
RIGHT.







STOP
GIVING
US
ORDERS,
BESHIMI.

GRAB



SQUABBLE
AMONGST
OURSELVES
AND WE
LOSE A
FIGHT WE
COULD
WIN.

STOP
IT.



.....

DON'T
YOU
FORGET
IT.



WE'RE
HERE
BECAUSE
OUR BOSS,
THE
OKASHIRA,
SAYS SO.



I,
HYOTTOKO,
WILL TAKE
CARE OF
THEM
ALONE!

FEH. THERE'S
ONLY TWO
OF 'EM. HOW
MANY DO
WE NEED?





HAND
OVER
MEGUMI
PEACEFULLY.

...ONIWA-
BANSHU,
CORRECT?

AND
I'LL GO
A LITTLE
EASIER
ON YOU.



.....

HOO-
HOO.

SNEER

"HYO-
TTOKO"
?
SOUNDS
TOO CUTE
FOR YOU.

PICK
SOME-
THING
BETTER.

I
AM THE
GREAT
HYOTTOKO!

YEAH.
ONE OF THE
ONIWA-
BANSHU.





FOR
COMING
WITHIN
RANGE...

MMG...
THANKS.

NO
MATTER
HOW
STRONG
YOU
ARE...



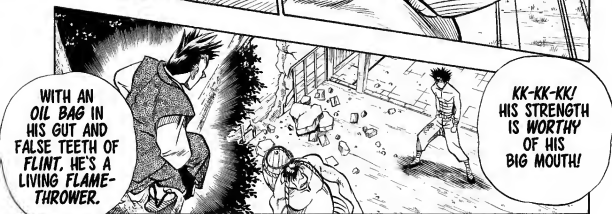
...STILL
YOU
GOTTA
LAND THE
HIT.



SANOSUKE
!!



《 READ THIS WAY 》



WITH AN
OIL BAG IN
HIS GUT AND
FALSE TEETH OF
FLINT, HE'S A
LIVING FLAME-
THROWER.

KK-KK-KK!
HIS STRENGTH
IS WORTHY
OF HIS
BIG MOUTH!



HERE
GOES...

THERE'S
NOTHING
HE CAN'T
BURN
UP!!

THE
KANJI FOR
HIS NAME
DOES MEAN
'FLAME
MAN'!



IT IS
THIS ONE
WHO
FACES
YOU.

WHY
LOOK
OVER
THERE?

TPPP
PP



JUST
WAIT.
YOU'LL BE
BURNED,
TOO.

YEAH,
RIGHT
AFTER I
FINISH THIS
ONE!



!!



FREAK
SHOW
?!

F...

NOT ONE
STRAND OF
THIS ONE'S
HAIR WILL
BURN, YOU
FREAK
SHOW.



"FREAK
SHOW,"
HAH!

TRY
THIS!!



HOW
LONG DO
YOU
THINK
YOU WILL
LAST?

IDIOT!!

WHIRLING
THE
SAKABATŌ--
TO MAKE A
SHIELD!





I COULD
LEAVE NOW
WITHOUT
ANYONE
NOTICING...



GOING
SOMEWHERE
?



NO.
HE'LL
WIN.

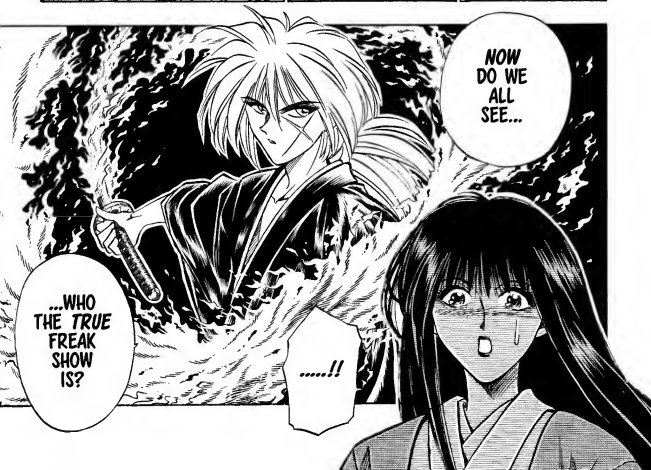
THAT
BOTTOM-
RANKED
BESHIMI,
HE WAS
DIFFERENT.

...YOUR
SWORDSMAN
CAN'T BEAT
THESE
FOES.

HYOTTOKO
IS MID-
RANKED
ONMITSU.
YOUR
FRIEND IS
DOOMED.

THE
LEAST
YOU CAN
DO IS
WATCH.

KENSHIN
IS
FIGHTING
FOR YOU.



The Secret Life of Characters (9) —Oniwabanshū • Hyottoko—

No motif here, either. Drawing upon my rudimentary kanji knowledge for the name (Hyottoko=fire+man), I eventually got a character who was, what do you know? A fire-breather.

Since he's an onmitsu (a ninja, in other words, although when you just write it like that, "ninja," it seems so cheesy, which is why it's onmitsu), I figured it was only natural for him to be a little flashy. In that sense, the fire-breathing didn't seem so bad. Looking back now, though, he does seem a bit out of place, not really organic to the world he's in.

Personality-wise, he's the guy who makes a big entrance and then gets just as spectacularly beaten—ridiculously overconfident and a bit of an idiot. Natural evolution of the character, I guess.

As for the matter of the fire-breathing and its defeat by Kenshin with the sword-spinning technique, know that I've been roundly criticized by fans, *dōjinshi* "fanzine" creators, and even personal friends for it. "They're both circus-freaks!" they exclaimed, leaving me with a bit of puzzled sadness. (In my defense, I was in the grip of summer doldrums at the time—not much of an excuse, but there you go. Forgive me.)

As mentioned earlier, what I'd wanted for the Oniwabanshū was an assortment of shapes and temperaments. What with there being an oil bag in his stomach, it figured that he'd be extremely fat. Never having drawn such a figure before, though, it was only after quite a while and several versions that I came up with something I could draw not only comfortably, but repeatedly. How cool was it to know that, once I got used to it, it actually came pretty easily.

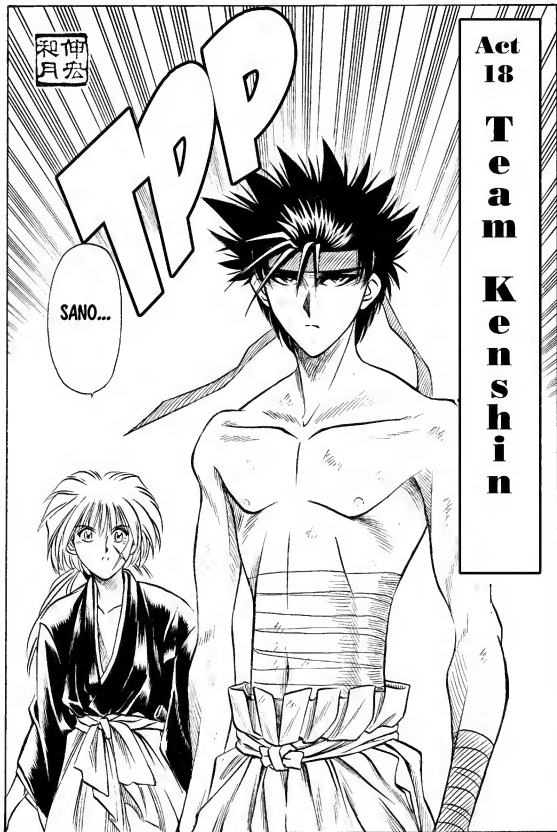




和伸
月宏

SANO...

Act
18
T
e
a
m
K
e
n
s
h
i
n





SORRY,
BUT...

...YOU'LL
HAVE TO
LET ME
TAKE
OVER!



BUT
HE'S
MINE.

THANKS
FOR
YOUR
HELP.



.....



SANOSUKE'S
LEG IS
HURT!

WHAT
ARE YOU
TWO
DOING
?!

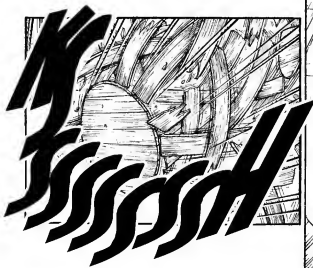


SHF

ALL
RIGHT.
HE'S
YOURS.

YEAH,
HE
SURE
IS.

KRAK





POOR
FOOL.
WALKING
TO YOUR
OWN
CREMATION!

REFUELING
COMPLETE.

TRICKS
DON'T WORK
ONCE YOU
KNOW
HOW THEY'RE
DONE.

YOU'RE
THE
FOOL.

"TRICKS."
HE
SAYS...

"FREAK,"
HE SAYS!!
I'LL BURN
YOU BOTH
UP!

H
S
S
S
S
S



**I'LL
CREMATE
YOU
ALL!!**

**YOU'RE
RIGHT!!**

**HE'LL
NEVER
DODGE
THIS
ONE!**

**LOOK
AT THAT
FLAME!**



DODGING GETS
YOU BURNED, SO
JUMPING TO THE
SOURCE MEANS
FEWER WOUNDS.

VERY
GOOD.

WHAT
!?



FOOG
!?

HYAAH
!!







WITH THOSE
BURNED
ARMS,
YOU CAN'T
REPEAT THAT
PUNCH FROM
BEFO--

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WITH NO
CHANCE!

YAH
??

BO

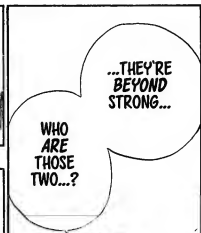


NOT
THAT A
SAUSAGE-LEG
LIKE YOU
WOULD THINK
OF IT.



YOU
FORGET
ABOUT
THE
KICKING.









I DON'T
CARE WHAT
KANRYŪ
SEES IN
YOU.
YOU
RUINED
MY
LIFE!

IT'S
ALL
YOUR
FAULT!

IF YOU
HADN'T
RUN ON
MY
WATCH,
I--!



I
WON'T
HAVE
IT!!



LOOK
OUT!
THERE'S
ANOTHER
ONE--!

AN
ATTACK!





WHAT
?!

NO!!

PR



OW!

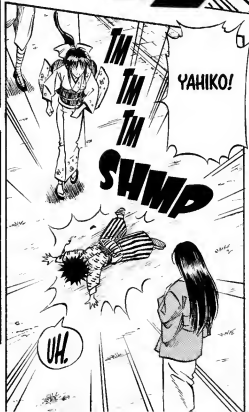
JERK

DO
YOU
EVER
QUIT?!



THIS IS
DANGEROUS--
STAY
BACK!

EVEN A
SMALL ONE
CAN BE
FATAL IF
IT HITS THE
HEART!



TM
TM
TM

YAHIKO!

SWMP

UH.



DEADLY
POISON
RASENBYŌ
!

THIS IS
ONIWA-
BANSHŪ
BESHIMI'S
SECRET
ART!!

THE
BRAT
WON'T
LAST
THE
HOUR.

KK-KK-KK/
AND
THAT'S
WHAT YOU
GET!!

POISON
...!!

NO!

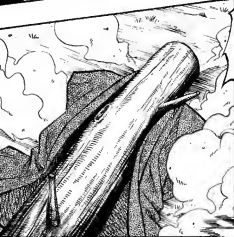
•RASENBYŌ: SPIRAL TACK!

UNH?

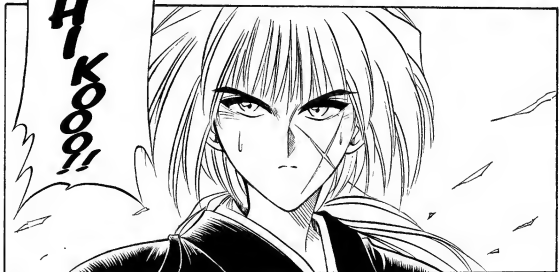
I'LL
FILL
YOU ALL
WITH IT!
AND
NEXT...

...IS
YOU,
RED
HAIR
!!

BMP







和仲
月宏

YAHIKO!!

Act
19
Daughter
of
Aizu





WHAT I
WISH NOW IS
TO COLLECT MY
FALLEN COMRADES
AND REPORT IN.



ENOUGH.
CAPTURING
TAKANI MEGUMI
AT THIS POINT
IS IMPOSSIBLE.



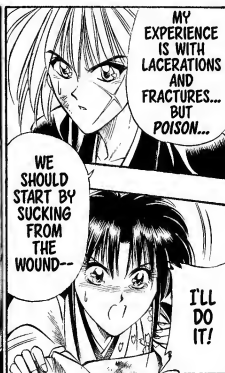
YOU ARE
THE ENEMY.
I HAVE NO
DUTY TO
YOU.

IF YOU
WANT TO
LEAVE, THIS
ONE WON'T
STOP YOU.
BUT THE
SHORT
ONE
STAYS--WE
NEED AN
ANTIDOTE
TO THE
POISON.

















《 READ THIS WAY 》



KANRYŪ
WON'T STRIKE
AGAIN SOON,
SO YOU
SHOULD BE
SAFE.



?!

DOES
NO
ONE
AWAIT
YOU...

...AT
YOUR
HOME IN
AIZU?

THIS ONE
FACED MANY
FROM AIZU
DURING THE
BAKUMATSU...
...IN
KYOTO.

YOU
CAN'T HIDE
AN ACCENT
LIKE THAT.
TRY AS YOU
MIGHT.



THE
TAKANI
FAMILY OF
AIZU* WAS
FAMOUS
WITHIN THE
MEDICAL
COMMUNITY.



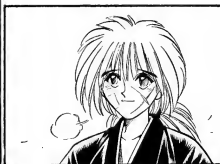
WHY
NOT
BREAK
SILENCE
...

...AND
TELL US
YOUR
TRUE
STORY?



...VERY
BAD
FOR
THE
HEART.

YOU
ARE...



*NOW KNOWN AS
FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE



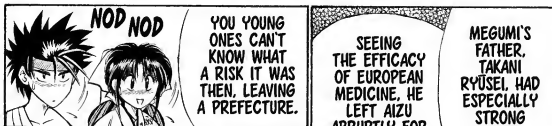
ALL
PATIENTS
WERE TO BE
TREATED
EQUALLY, THAT
WAS WELL
KNOWN.

EVERYONE,
FOR GENERATIONS--
WOMEN AND
CHILDREN ALIKE--
STUDIED MEDICINE.
ASTONISHING!



"TO THOSE SAMURAI
WHO HELD THE
RIGID CASTE
SYSTEM OF THE
TIME AS ABSOLUTE,
THEY WERE A
NUISANCE. BUT TO
WE DOCTORS, THEY
WERE OUR IDEAL,
COME TO LIFE."

"IN THE EDO
PERIOD, EVEN
WHILE THEY
HELD HIGH-RANK
AS PHYSICIANS
TO A WARLORD,
THEY SAW ALL
PATIENTS--
REGARDLESS
OF CLASS.

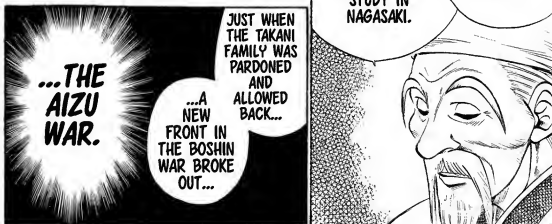


NOD NOD

YOU YOUNG
ONES CAN'T
KNOW WHAT
A RISK IT WAS
THEN, LEAVING
A PREFECTURE.

SEEING
THE EFFICACY
OF EUROPEAN
MEDICINE, HE
LEFT AIZU
ABRUPTLY FOR
STUDY IN
NAGASAKI.

MEGUMI'S
FATHER,
TAKANI
RYUSEI, HAD
ESPECIALLY
STRONG
BELIEFS.



**...THE
AIZU
WAR.**

...A
NEW
FRONT IN
THE BOSHIN
WAR BROKE
OUT...

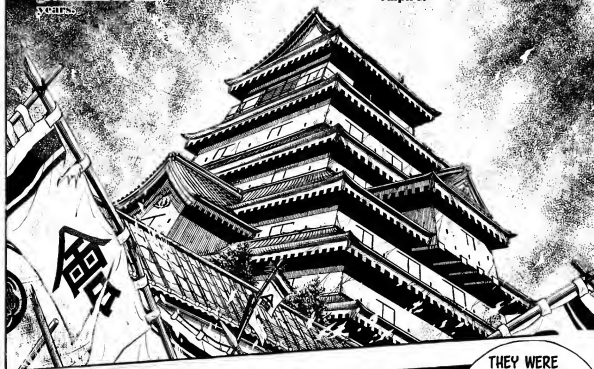
JUST WHEN
THE TAKANI
FAMILY WAS
PARDONED
AND
ALLOWED
BACK...

Aizu had called itself the "Guardian of Kyoto," defending the ancient capital and opposing the Ishin Shishi patriots by sponsoring the rival, shogunate-supporting Shinsengumi. Because of this, after the revolution, Aizu was discriminated against by the new Meiji government for many years.

Aizu fought back with all its people, even when reduced to little more than its central castle. But Aizu was unable to compete against the more modern equipment of the revolutionary army, and surrendered on September 22, 1868.

The fourth great battle of the Boshin War—between the domain of Aizu, which rejected the authority of the reformation government, and the Imperial Army, which declared Aizu an enemy of the empire.

Aizu War



FROM THAT
MOMENT ON,
MEGUMI-SAN
WAS ALONE--



...AND
HER
MOTHER
AND TWO
BROTHERS
WENT
MISSING.

THEY WERE
DOCTORS, SO
YOUNG MEGUMI
WAS LEFT BEHIND
AS THE FAMILY
WENT TO THE
BATTLEFIELDS.
HER FATHER
WAS KILLED IN
BATTLE...



READ
THIS
WAY

WHERE
SHE WENT
AFTER THAT,
I DON'T
KNOW.

AS I TOLD
YOU, THREE
YEARS AGO
HE WAS
KILLED.

...BUT,
FIVE YEARS
AGO, SHE
REAPPEARED
AS A
DOCTOR'S
ASSISTANT.

I CAN
ONLY
IMAGINE
WHAT'S
HAPPENED TO
HER SINCE
THEN...

OH!

I'D VERY
MUCH LIKE TO
SEE HER.
WHERE IS
SHE?

I KNEW
THAT DOCTOR.
WHICH IS HOW
I HEARD
OF HER.

THE
DOCTOR I
SERVED HAD
BEEN WORKING
WITH
KANRYŪ.

FIVE
YEARS
AGO, I
HAD NO
EYE FOR
PEOPLE.

NOW
THAT YOU
MENTION
IT, I...

DON'T
TELL ME
SHE--!

◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

MEANING,
FOUR TIMES
THE
PROFIT.

WITH
ONLY HALF
THE POPPY
JUICE, IT'S
TWICE AS
POTENT.

"SPIDER'S
WEB."
LIKE
ORDINARY
OPIUM, BUT
BETTER
PROCESSED.

...AND
AFTER
PROCESSING,
THE DOCTOR
WOULD SELL
IT BACK.
EFFICIENT.

KANRYŪ
OBTAINED
RAW OPIUM
INGREDIENTS
FOR VERY
LITTLE...

DISTRIBUTED
EFFECTIVELY,
IN FIVE
YEARS ALL
TOKYO
COULD BE
ADDICTED.

UNTIL
THE
DOCTOR
CREATED
THIS.

THEY FOUGHT.
KANRYŪ
ACCIDENTALLY
KILLED HIM.

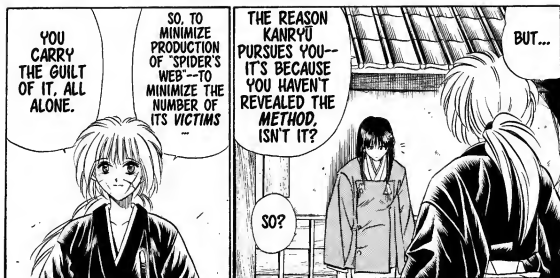
KANRYŪ WANTED TO
MASS-PRODUCE, SO
HE TRIED TO GET THE
METHOD OUT OF THE
DOCTOR. BUT THE GOOD
DOCTOR WOULDN'T TELL
HIM—HE WANTED THE
PROFITS FOR HIMSELF.

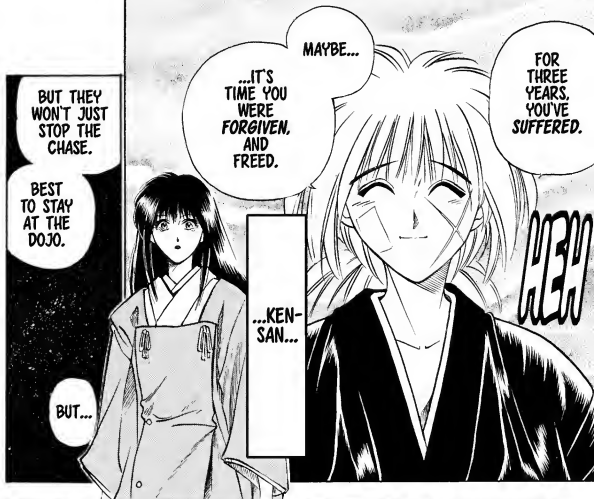
WHEN I
LEARNED
THE TRUTH,
I WANTED
TO DIE.

THEY
TOLD ME I
WAS MAKING
MEDICINE TO
SAVE
PEOPLE'S
LIVES.

THUS, I, LOYAL
ASSISTANT
AND THE ONLY
ONE WHO
KNOWS THE
METHOD...

...WAS
FORCED
TO WORK
FOR THEM.







NOW AS
FOR KANRYŪ
AND THE
OTHERS...

SIGH...



?

OR I
TOSS YOU
IN THE
STREET!

PSS
PSS

JUST
KEEP YOUR
HANDS OFF
HIM--



YES.

I
KNOW
WHAT IT
IS TO BE
ALONE.

WITHOUT
KENSIN,
I'D BE
JUST LIKE
YOU.



.....



YES.

IS
THAT RIGHT?
BESHIMI AND
HYOTTOKO,
OUT OF ACTION
FOR NOW.



THAT
MAN IS
NO MERE
SWORDSMAN.

HE CAUGHT
ME OFF-GUARD.
HE USED THE
FORCE OF MY
OWN BLOW TO
STRIKE AT MY
LIVER.



AND
YOU,
HAN'NYA,
HOW IS
YOUR
WOUND?

I'M
FINE...
BARELY
...



FOR
TWO, THREE
DAYS...
NO.

BUT
I CAN
WATCH.

CAN
YOU
MOVE?

PAP



THERE
MUST BE
SOMETHING
ABOUT
HIM...

THEN
YOU'VE
THREE DAYS
TO LEARN
OF HIS
PAST.



Act 20

A Reason to Act





IT'S
BEEN YEARS
SINCE I'VE
MADE
OHAGI.



HO.



WOW.



OH.

《 READ THIS WAY 》





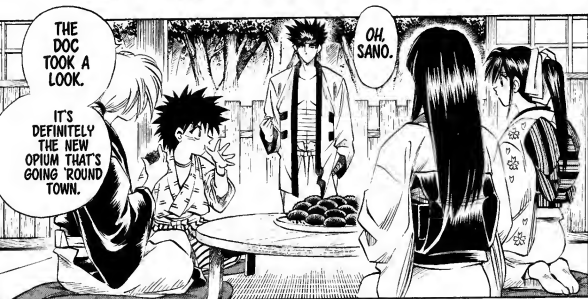
COMEDY
ROUTINES
SO EARLY
IN THE
MORNING?



THAT'S
A
GOOD
SIGN!

IS
NOT
!

SIZZLE



THE
DOC
TOOK A
LOOK.

IT'S
DEFINITELY
THE NEW
OPIUM THAT'S
GOING 'ROUND
TOWN.

OH,
SANO.

I'D RATHER
EAT YOU-
KNOW-WHO'S
COOKING
THAN OPIUM
WOMAN'S.

DON'T
WANT
TO.

HAVE
YOU
EATEN
YET?

I
SEE.



HSSSS



*A CANNON FIRED AT NOON TO TELL TIME



HE
CAN'T
BRING
HIMSELF
TO BLAME
YOU.

BUT
KANRYŪ
HASN'T
MADE A
MOVE ALL
WEEK.



OPIUM
WOMAN...

.....
KΛΛK

LET
HIM BE
FOR A
WHILE.

KΛΛK KΛΛK

!

HELLO!

JUST...
VISITING,
A
WHILE...

BEEN
SEEING YOU
AROUND.
YOU
LIVE HERE
NOW?

A LOT
OF NEW
TITLES.
TAKE A
LOOK?

I'M
THE
BOOK
LENDER.

HOPE
I'M NOT
INTRUDING.

FMP

HMM...

MM.
I'D
SAY...

KREE



...THAT
WORKS
OUT
JUST
FINE!!



MMG!!

GSSH



ONLY
TALK. HE
WILL NOT
FORCE YOU
BACK.

TAKEDA
KANRYŪ
WISHES
TO TALK
TO YOU.



I ASK
THAT YOU
ACCOMPANY
ME.

.....!!



MERCURY
....!!

SHOON!

QUIET. CAUSE
TROUBLE, AND
THIS GOES
INTO THEIR
WELL.



I'D DIE FIRST.	YOU CAN'T REALLY THINK I'D SAY "SURE!" AND TROT ON BACK!?	I WANT YOU BACK, ALL RIGHT? WILL YOU MAKE ME SAY IT? ...WHAT DO YOU WANT?
HSSSS THEN I'VE ONE MORE THING TO SAY...		



A GOOD
500 MEN WILL
SEE THAT NOT
EVEN A MOUSE
CAN ESCAPE.

SSSSHHHH

MY PRIVATE
ARMY, THE
ONIWABANSHŪ,
ALL THE
YAKUZA IN
THE AREA...

BUT WE
CAN'T HAVE
YOU DYING
ALONE, SO
YOUR FRIENDS
GO TOO.



"IF
THE BIRD
WILL NOT
SING, KILL
IT."

NO
MORE
CHASING
DREAMS.



GOT
IT?



NOW THAT
WE KNOW THE
MAN WITH THE
CROSS-SHAPED
SCAR IS THE
LEGENDARY
HITOKIRI, HIMURA
BATTOSAI...

IT'S BEST
WE DON'T
FORCE THE
ISSUE.

SHE'LL
HAVE
TO.

WILL
TAKANI
MEGUMI
COME
BACK?



I
CAN'T
ESCAPE
...

REASON...



NOT
FROM
OPIUM.
I CAN'T
ESCAPE...
NOT
EVER.

NOT
FROM
KANRYU
...

...OPIUM
WOMAN.



"TAKANI
MEGUMI
LEFT OF
HER OWN
ACCORD."

THAT
WAY, THERE'S
NO REASON
FOR BATTOSAI
TO ACT.



OPIUM
WOMAN

...



Long time no see! Watsuki here.
About those fan letters, again—
I've been getting more and more from
you guys. We're becoming more like a
"young men's" magazine, but even so,
the ratio is still running 73 females
over males. I do still plan to reply to
you, so please be patient, just
a bit longer—especially those of you
who've sent multiple letters already.
(I'm so sorry!)

Watsuki





GO
AHEAD.



WHY
SHOULD
I FIGHT
FOR THAT
OPIUM
WOMAN?

SANOSUKE
!?

HEY,
WHERE
DO YOU
GET OFF
IN--!?!
THP



IT
DOESN'T
SUIT
YOU.

SANO,
THAT'S
ENOUGH.





DID
YOU EVER
SEE MEGUMI-
DONO'S EYES,
SANO?



"...SHE
WATCHED
US WITH
SUCH
LONELINESS."

IT'S
HER
...

"SHE ACTED
TOUGH, BUT
SOMETIMES,
JUST FOR
A MOMENT..."



"...LOOKING
FOR THE
FAMILY
SHE
LOST."

...THAT
TAKANI
MEGUMI
IS BACK.

TELL
KANRYŪ...

"LIKE
AN
ABANDONED
CHILD..."



...FOR
THIS ONE,
IT'S MORE
THAN
ENOUGH.

WHATEVER
REASON
A MAN
NEEDS TO
ACT...



I'M GONNA SAVE HER IF IT KILLS ME!



SHUT UP! SHE SAVED MY LIFE!

...WHEN DID HE BECOME SO...?



...THIS BOY...





LET'S
GO!!

HAVE
BREAKFAST
AND BATHS
FOR FIVE
READY FOR
WHEN WE
GET BACK.

IT'S GONNA
BE AN
OVERNIGHT
JOB.

SANO-
SUKU!

I'M GOING
TO DO
WHAT I
DO--AND
FIGHT!

I'M
TIRED OF
THINKING
ABOUT
IT.

...GOOD.

和仲
月宏

THIS
IS THE
TAKEDA
KANRYU
MANSION?

Act 21 The Storm Breaks

SO HOW
DO WE
ATTACK
IT?

TP

YEAH.
AND
IT LOOKS
TACKIER
AND MORE
GROTESQUE
EVERY TIME.

FRONTAL
ASSAULT,
THEN?
GOOD.

Two guards already
-KO!

WITHOUT
NUMBERS,
IT'S SPEED.
WE BREAK
THE GATE
AND RUN.

LET'S
GO!!

BON!
BON!
.....

SANOSUKE.

DON'T
SLOW US
DOWN.
GOT IT?

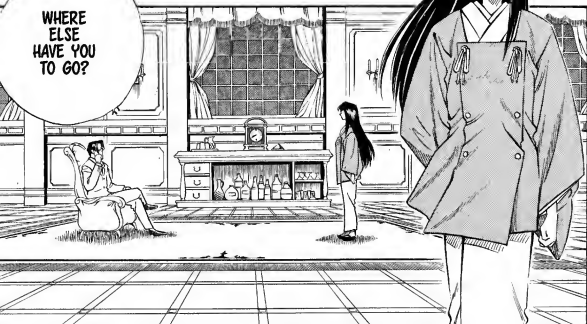




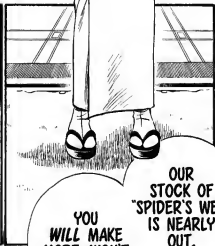
WELCOME
HOME,
MEGUMI-
SAN.

I
KNEW
YOU'D
COME
BACK.

WHERE
ELSE
HAVE YOU
TO GO?



WHY
MUST
YOU
ALWAYS
REJECT
ME?



OUR
STOCK OF
"SPIDER'S WEB"
IS NEARLY
OUT.

YOU
WILL MAKE
MORE, WON'T
YOU?





DON'T
WORRY. YOU
AND I ARE
LINKS IN A
CHAIN.

I'LL
FOLLOW
YOU
SHORTLY.



NO
LONGER
WILL OTHERS'
LIVES KEEP
ME ALIVE.

I DID
SAY I'D
RATHER
DIE THAN
RETURN.



WE'RE
FALLING
TO HELL
TOGETHER.

THIS
IS THE
ONE SMALL
APOLOGY I
CAN OFFER MY
VICTIMS.

《 READ THIS WAY 》

LET'S
STOP
HERE...

!!

MY
SWORD
...

LITTLE...

HSS

YOU
...

HH

HH

HH

WRETCH!!



...THE
GREAT
KANRYU
!!

DO NOT
UNDER-
ESTIMATE
...



TGG



YOUR MENTOR
DEFIED ME,
TOO--AND
THINGS WENT
WRONG!

SO I
WAS NICE
TO YOU--
AND WHAT
DO I
GET?!



CALL
MY MEN!!
WE'LL
TORTURE
IT OUT
OF HER!!

S
H
M
P



WHY?

THEY'RE
OUT IN
THE
YARD.

LISTEN
AND
YOU'LL
UNDER-
STAND.



HH

HH

HH



THAT
MAN...

...IS
HERE!

READ
THIS
WAY



THE
EMERGENCY
WHISTLE
...?!



U
W
A
A
A
H
!?!



HE...
HE'S SO
FAST...
IS HE...

SSSS

...HUMAN
?

LOOK
OUT--

HEADS
UP-
UP-
UP!





--OR
GET
HURT!!



I SAID
DON'T...
SLOW US
DOWN!

YOU
STILL
TALKING,
PUNK?!

KID
WON'T
QUIT.

HYOON



SANOSUKE
!!

HF

HF



STRONG!

**THAT'S
WHAT
THESE
TWO
ARE!!**



THAT'S
THE
SWORDSMEN
AND YAKUZA
DOWN...



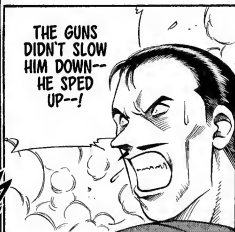
**YOU
MEAN THREE,
JERK!!!**

BOOOO

TAKE
AIM!

GUNMEN!





Sure, you may THINK I'm behind the times, but lately I'm hooked on "Samurai Damashi'i" (Samurai Spirits, also known in the U.S. as "Samurai Shodown"). I even bought a NED*GED CD to play it!

So now you're thinking I'm a gamer, maybe, but that wouldn't be true. Watsuki has been to an arcade, like, five times in his life, and THAT'S only because of his assistants, so I seriously suck. Even on "Easy Mode," I lose all the time, and Hachmaru is always dying. Worse, because I can play no more than one or two hours a week, I never get any better at it.

As I write this, I have yet to get my hands on "Shin (New) Samurai Damashi'i" ("Samurai Shodown II"), but as you READ this, most likely Kibagami Genjuro has already begun dying his endless deaths by my hand. (Apologies to those of you who have no interest in video games, and have no idea what this is all about.)





FLY,
YAHIKO!
!



IT'S
YOUR
CUE...



YAHIKO
!!

SANO!



!!!

SHOW
US
WHAT
YOU
GOT!!

READ
THIS
WAY

YOU...

GUH!

WOK

YAAH!!

WHAT
?!

LITTLE

RR!

VSH

HUH?

TWIK

TWIK

I HATED
PICKPOCKETING.
BUT NOW IT'S
HANDY. AIN'T
LIFE GRAND?

LOOKING
FOR THIS,
MISTER?

K-TCHK

GEH!



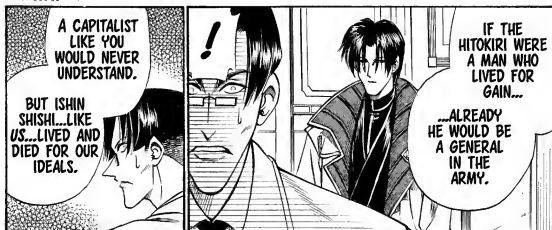


FUMP



◀ READ THIS WAY ▶





Rurouni Kenshin



Act 22

Attack on Kanryū Mansion



伸
月
宏

WE
CAN'T MAKE
THE LEGENDARY
HITOKIRI OUR
ENEMY....!!

HE...
CAN'T BE...
SERIOUS...

DON'T
BE A
FOOL.

WE
WANT
THIS
FIGHT.

WHAT'S
UP,
KENSHIN?

SKRIK



KANRYŪ!!

HSSSS

EEP!



HNH...



YOUR
TIME HAS
COME,
TAKEDA
KANRYU.



COME
DOWN WITH
MEGUMI-DONO.



...!!



.....

HNH
HNH
HNH!!



WHAT
THE--?

HNH
HNH!!



HNH
HNH
HNH!!

HAS
HE
GONE
NUTS?



...HNH.

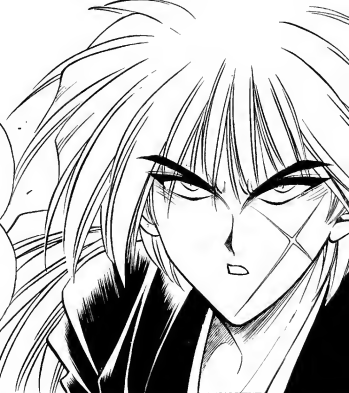
HNH
HNH.





ARE
YOU COMING
DOWN OR
WAITING
THERE?

CHOOSE!



....200
!!



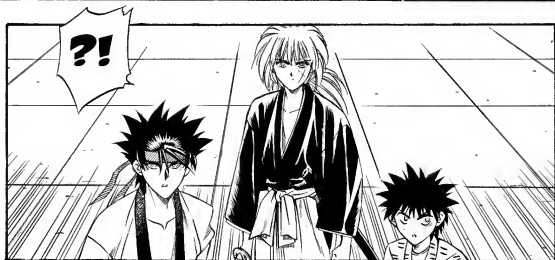
THEN--
100 MEN'S
WAGES!



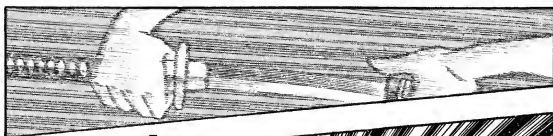
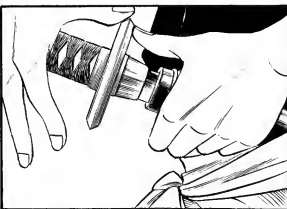
HIMURA
BATTOSAI
DOES NOT
LIVE FOR
GAIN--I
TOLD YOU.

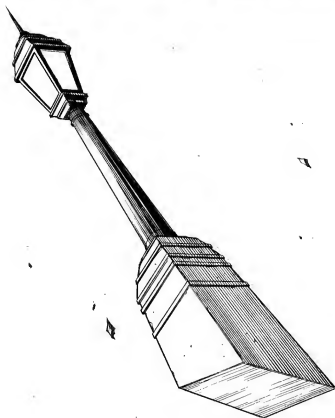


YOU
DON'T GET
IT. YOUR
MONEY'S OF
NO USE
HERE.







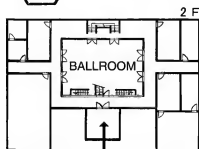






MAKE
YOUR
PEACE
IN
THAT
TIME!!!

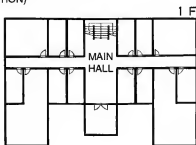
ONE
HOUR,
KANRYŪ
!!!



KANRYŪ / OKASHIRA / MEGUMI
(PRESENT LOCATION)

MY LEFT
AND RIGHT
ARMS WAIT
AT THE STAIRS, IN
THE ENTRANCE
HALL.

I WAIT ATOP
THE STAIRS,
IN THE 2ND
STORY
BALLROOM.



WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN...

...YOU
WON'T
ALLOW?

!

...IS
NOT
YOU.

TM TM

HEAR ME,
THE ONE WHO
COMMANDS
THE ONIWA-
BANSHŪ...

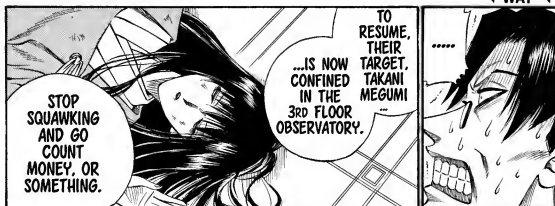
I WON'T
ALLOW
THOSE
UNWORTHY
OF WHAT
I'M
PAYING!!

NO MORE
CLUMSY
BESHIMIS
OR
HYOTTOKOS,
YOU GOT
THAT?!

GNIP

AND I
ALLOW
INSULTS
FROM NO
ONE!

IT IS MY
ONIWABANSHŪ.





THIS...
IS...





**K
T
U
N
G**

Shu

EVERY
LAST
ONE OF
THEM...A
FOOL.

THE
PEOPLE
AT THAT
DOJO...

I
RETURN
IT TO
YOU.

YOUR
SHORT
SWORD.

WHAT
AWAITS YOU
IN AN HOUR
IS NOT A
SAVIOR, BUT
KANRYU'S
TORTURE.

DON'T
GET YOUR
HOPES UP.
THEY WILL
NOT REACH
HERE.

!

KIAT

KIAT

CHOOSE
WHICHEVER
YOU
DESIRE.

LIVING
IN
TORMENT,
OR DYING
WITH
GRACE.

◀ READ
THIS
WAY ▶



I DO
FEEL IT,
THE MISERY
OF YOUR
LIFE...



WE CAME
TO THIS NEST
BUILT BY OPIUM
IN SEARCH OF
AN ENEMY
WORTHY OF OUR
SWORDS.

THANKS
TO YOU, WE
FACE THE
GREATEST
ENEMY OF
ALL.



THIS...
IS FOR
THAT.

WHAT
THE
ONIWABANSHU
DESIRE IS
BATTLE.

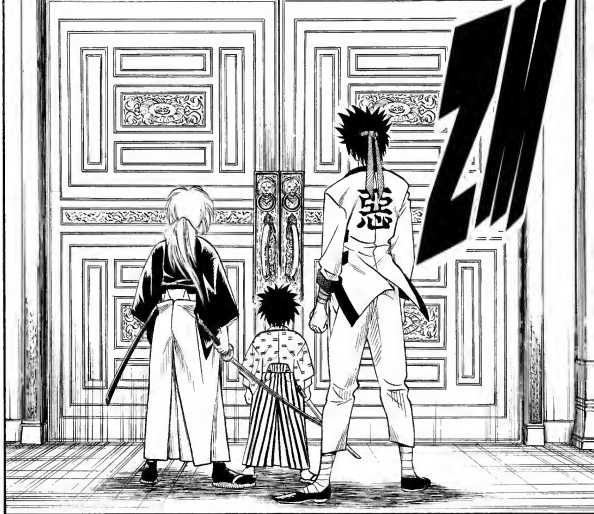


WE
HAVE NO
INTEREST
IN KANRYU'S
MONEY OR
OPIUM.



BAM

...THOUGH
IT
MATTERS
BUT
LITTLE.



NO
SLACKING
NOW.

FROM
HERE ON, IT'S
ONIWABANSHU
GUARDING
HER.



WHO
MADE
YOU
BOSS?

LET'S
GO!!

DAH!





THE FIRST
TO FACE US
WOULD BE A
MAN OF YOUR
CALIBER...



...SURPRISING.



IT IS
INEVITABLE
THAT WE
FIGHT.

I
TOLD
YOU
BEFORE.

Rurouni Kenshin

What you're about to read is the very first *Rurouni*, published half a year before the story included at the end of Volume 1. If we think of that story as a "side-story," we can think of this one as the series "pilot"—with some of the details being different between then and now. This early story loosely echoes the later "Megumi Arc," as will become clear once you start reading—though, in this version, Megumi, Kaoru and Yahiko are all siblings. (Megumi's personality is also completely changed.)

One thing about it I can now tell you is that the *Rurouni Kenshin* series wasn't begun entirely of Watsuki's own will. Having had some positive feedback with a "historical" debut work, still there was no getting around the fact that historical stories were *hard*. I'd thought to do my next work—what ended up becoming this story—in a contemporary setting, but my editor said to me, "You're a new, up-and-coming artist who's achieved some success (in historical genres); why not make your next one the same? If that proves popular as well, you can run with it." That's how I wound up doing *Rurouni*.

My goal was to take the time-period (Bakumatsu) from *Moeyo Ken*—Watsuki's bible—and combine it with a *Sngata Sanshirō*-type story. Complicating things further was the title, which went through many revisions. It started as "Nishin (Two-Hearts) Kenshin," went to "Yorozuya (Jack-of-All-Trades) Kenshin," then to several variations of "Rurouni" and "Kenshin"—sometimes with different *kanji*—ending up, eventually, as "Rurouni, Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story." It took me eight months to do a 45-page story...only for it to fall to the tender editorial mercies of a selection committee. Suffice it to say, the process was *not* easy.

A year and a half to age, and eventually the *Rurouni Kenshin* series we know today was born. Once again, let me take this opportunity to thank all you fans, who've given me such support.

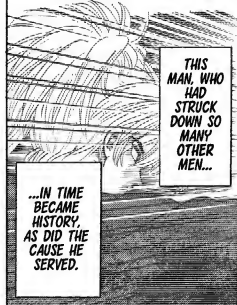
GLOOOOOM



What
was I
thinking,
leaving
it in
here...??



Oh,
man, looking
back now,
this art
BITES.



THIS
MAN, WHO
HAD
STRUCK
DOWN SO
MANY
OTHER
MEN...

...IN TIME
BECAME
HISTORY,
AS DID THE
CAUSE HE
SERVED.

...THERE
LIVED A
WARRIOR-
PATRIOT
CALLED
"HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI."

LONG
AGO, IN
KYOTO
DURING
THE
BAKUMATSU
...



WELL,
IF YOU
MUST
KNOW...

BUT
NOW...

...IN THE
10TH
YEAR OF
MEIJI...



WA
HA
HA
HA

THAT'S
WHY THE
SWORD IS
AT MY
SIDE.

THIS
ONE IS A
"RURONI."



ORO?

RURONI?
NOW? DON'T
YOU KNOW OF
THE SWORD-
BANNING
ACT?!



**END-OF-
VOLUME
SPECIAL (2)**

RURONI

**MEIJI
SWORDSMAN
ROMANTIC
STORY**



READ
THIS
WAY



◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

I SAID,
YOU
CAN'T
HELP!!

I
NEED TO
DO IT, OR
IT DOESN'T
MATTER.

BUT
YOU
CAN'T
DO IT.

STOMP

STOMP

THAT'S NO
WAY TO...
WHY NOT
TALK, AT
LEAST...?

IF
THERE'S
SOMETHING
ELSE YOU
NEED...

...THIS
ONE
WILL
DO IT.

THIS
IS
WHERE
YOU
LIVE?

EX-
CUSE
ME!
WE'RE
POOR,
SO
WHAT?!

FOUND
YOU!!

JAB

LET'S
GO TO
YOUR
HOUSE.

CAN'T
THINK
HERE...

TAKE
ME
FOR A
FOOL...!

LEMME
GO!

《 READ THIS WAY 》

MY
DAD WAS
RANKED
NO. 2 IN
JAPAN.
IF HE
HADN'T
DIED,
WE...

WE
USED TO
HAVE A
KENJUTSU
"SWORD
ARTS"
DOJO.

HLAT-
TAT

ORO.

YOU
GUYS
DON'T
LEARN...

GR

EH EH

OH, YOU
MUST BE
THE BOY'S
SISTER.
PLEASED
TO--

GYAH!

FLAT





HE
WAS THE
STRONGEST,
NEXT TO
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI!!

THAT'S
NOT TRUE.
DAD WAS
GREAT!

...BUT
EVEN
THOUGH
I'M HIS
DAUGHTER,
I CAN'T
SAY HE
REALLY...

WELL, NO...
HE DID INHERIT
THE KAMIYA
KASSHIN-RYU
DOJO, PASSED
DOWN FROM
GENERATION
TO
GENERATION...

OH.

SLURP

UGH.

PEFFFFF

AND SO,
COUPLED
WITH A
CHILD'S
ADMIRATION
FOR HIS
FATHER...

... "FATHER
WAS
STRONG"
BECAME
HIS
MANTRA.

YAHIKO
WASN'T
TAUGHT BY
FATHER. NO.
BEFORE
HE
COULD...

...HE
DIED
IN THE
SEINAN
WAR.

YOU'RE
RIGHT,
YAHIKO.
I'M
SORRY.

SO THAT
IS WHY IN
JAPAN, FATHER
IS NO. 2, WHILE
BATTOSAI IS
NO. 1.

DURING
FATHER'S DAYS
AS AN ANTI-
FOREIGNER
ROYALIST,
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI
WAS HIS
COMPATRIOT.

FATHER
PRAISED
HIM DAILY,
CALLING
HIM THE
GREATEST
IN
JAPAN.

"HITEN
MITSURUGI-RYU"
ITSELF IS
MERE LEGEND
FROM THE
AGE OF
WARLORDS...*

THEY SAY
HIS HITEN
MITSURUGI-RYU
KILLED THREE
MEN IN ONE SWING.
I DON'T BUY IT.

"HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI..."

BUT
THIS IS A
KAMIYA
CONCERN.

YOU'VE
GOT NO
PLACE
IN IT.
WHOEVER
YOU MAY
BE!!

...LOOK.
I'M SORRY
I HIT YOU.
YOU
COULDN'T
HAVE
KNOWN.

RIGHT?

RIGHT? RIGHT?

IT HAS
NOTHING
TO DO WITH
YOU, SO
BACK OFF!

YOU KNOW
A LOT. WHAT
OF THIS
"NISHIWAKI"
YOU
MENTIONED
...?

WHOA.

*"AGE OF WARLORDS" OR "WARRING-STATES PERIOD," A.K.A. SENGOKU JIDAI



STOP
THIS
POINTLESS
RESISTANCE.

COME
HOME...
BACK TO
OUR
KAMIYA
DOJO.

YOU
WERE
WEAK TO
BEGIN
WITH...
HOW DO
YOU BEAR
THE
POVERTY
?

YOU'RE
THINNER
THAN
EVER,
MEGUMI-
SAN.

NISHIWAKI-
SAN...

SO
THIS
IS
HIM.

STOLEN
BY THE
DOJO'S
"INTERIM"
MASTER!!

...HE
TOOK
IT
FROM
US.

BUT...THE
GENER-
ATIONS...
MEGUMI-
DONO
SAID--

"OUR"
...?

...AND
BROUGHT
IN HIS
GOONS
INSTEAD!

DIDN'T
YOU,
NISHIWAKI!!

WHEN
FATHER DIED,
THE DOJO HAD
NO MASTER.
HE FORCED
OUT OUR
STUDENTS--

TP

RR

WHAP



SO-O-O...



AND, NO
MATTER
HOW
FEISTY
SHE IS, NO
WOMAN CAN
EVER BE
MASTER.

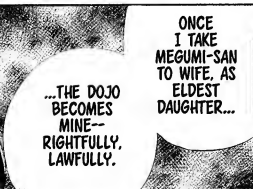


HOWEVER
PRESTIGIOUS
THE DOJO,
WITHOUT A
MASTER, IT'S
OVER.

I PREFER
TO SAY THAT
I STEPPED
FORWARD
AND AM
HOLDING
IT FOR YOU.



WON'T
I
DEAR?



ONCE
I TAKE
MEGUMI-SAN
TO WIFE, AS
ELDEST
DAUGHTER...

...THE DOJO
BECOMES
MINE--
RIGHTFULLY,
LAWFULLY.



SO MEGUMI-
DONO IS THE
KEY TO THE
ENTIRE
SCHEME.

MAKING
HIM THE
ONE THE
BOY WANTED
TO KILL.



YOU
STAY
BACK
FROM MY
SISTER!!



LET'S
DROP THE
CHIT-CHAT
AND GO
HOME.

ORO.





◀ READ
THIS
WAY ▶

YAHIKO,
STOP!

YOU'RE
IN THE
WAY!

MOVE,
BRAT!

MP
IP

YAHIKO.

YAHIKO
!!

GRR

AAHHH!!



THE
LANDLORD
...



TCH

I OUGHT
TO CALL
THE
POLICE!!

THIS
IS MY
PROPERTY
!!

HERE,
NOW!



DO YOU
THINK WE'RE
AFRAID
OF THE
POLICE?!!



PWIK

STOP IT,
NOW!!!





THINGS
GOT A
BIT OUT
OF HAND,
MEGUMI-
SAN.

BUT
IT'S ALL
FOR THE
SAKE OF
KAMIYA
KASSHI-
RYŪ.



WHAT IS
BEST FOR ALL?
THAT, YOU MUST
CONSIDER.

IT
MUST
GRIEVE YOU
TO THINK
OF IT AS
ENDING
WITH YOUR
FATHER.



WE
WERE
JUST
GOING.
SO
SORRY
FOR THE
TROUBLE.

BUT...
BUT...



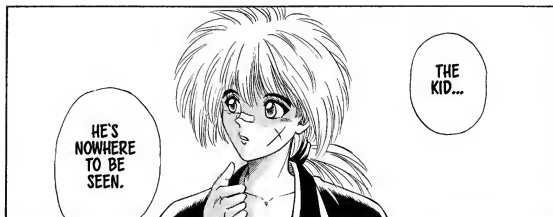
UM...
WELL...

WHAT
IS THE
MEANING
OF THIS,
KAMIYA-
SAN?
EXPLAIN
IT TO
ME.



HUH
?

THE
KID.



HE FELT
KNOWING THE
SWORD SHOULD
ALSO MEAN
KNOWING VALOR,
AND DECENCY...
NO MATTER
WHO YOU
WERE.

HE
ALWAYS
DID
SEE THE
BEST IN
PEOPLE.

BUT...

FATHER
WAS
FOOLED BY
HIS SKILL,
AND LET
HIM IN.

NOW
WE'RE
ALL...



...IS
THERE
SOMETHING
WRONG?

...BUT
HOW
COULD
HE?

HE
SPEAKS
AS
THOUGH
HE KNEW
HIM...



LET THIS ONE HAVE A TRY.

WHY DID YOU--?!
AHH



ACK!
YAH--



HOLD ON.

YANK



HE'S ON THE ROOF.

THERE.



.....?



RIGHT?

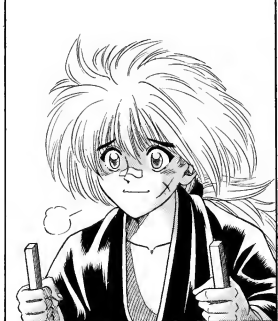
A TALK, MAN-TO-MAN.
WHILE YOU, THE YOUNG LADY, WAIT HERE.



LET'S GO BACK IN.

POP
YOUR SISTERS ARE WORRIED.

HEY.



YOU
WANT TO
PROTECT
THEM
YOURSELF.

"I NEED
TO DO
IT, OR IT
DOESN'T
MATTER."
RIGHT?



WHAT
YOU HATE
IS THAT YOU
LACK THE
STRENGTH
TO PROTECT
THEM.



NO. YOU
LOVE
YOUR
SISTERS,
VERY
MUCH.

KAMIYA
YAHIKO
OUGHT
TO BE
STRONG.

YOU'RE
STILL SMALL,
BUT YOU'RE
THE SON OF
THE NO. 2
SWORD IN
JAPAN.

YOUR
FATHER
NEVER SAID,
"BECOME
HITOKIRI,"
DID HE?

BUT,
YAHIKO...
KILLING
PEOPLE
IS STILL
WRONG.

THAT'S A
GUARANTEE--
SO DONT
WORRY!
♥

LIKE THAT
SHOULD
MEAN
SOMETHING
TO ME?!

KICK!

WHADDA
YOU
KNOW,
WEAKLING?!

ORO?

HIS IS
A LONELY
SWORD
THAT
LEAVES
ONLY
REGRETS
BEHIND.

HOWEVER
STRONG,
A HITOKIRI
ISN'T
EVER THE
REAL
THING.

BE THAT
AS IT MAY.
BUT YOU
WILL BE
STRONG.



IF I
ONLY
GIVE
IN...



I CAN'T
LET
THEM
SUFFER
ANY
LONGER
...

YAHIKO AND
KAORU CAN'T
TAKE ANY
MORE...

GIP



IT MUST GRIEVE
YOU TO THINK OF
IT AS ENDING WITH
YOUR FATHER.



WHAT IS
BEST FOR ALL?
THAT, YOU MUST
CONSIDER.

...IF
ONLY I
GO TO
HIM...

...GO TO
THAT MAN.
ALL WILL
BE WELL.



OH-H-H,
SO THAT'S
WHY YOU
WON'T...!

WELL,
IT'S LATE,
SO LET'S
CALL IT
A NIGHT.

NEVER
YOU
MIND,
YAHIKO...

DON'T
EVEN
GO
THERE!!

WHAT A
WASTE...
YOU'RE
BOTH SO
BEAUTIFUL.

GO
WHERE
??

MAKE
YOURSELF
AT HOME
WHY DON'T
YOU?!?

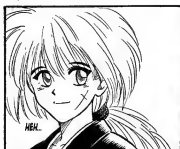


READ
THIS
WAY



I'm going to Nishiwaki.
Kaoru, please care for Yuhiko.
—Megumi





◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

N-NISHIWAKI-SAN, WHAT...?

YOU OUGHT NEVER ENTER THE DOJO WITHOUT CHECKING FIRST.

SO GLAD YOU'VE COME.

BUT...

ONE OF THE FEW PLACES CLOSED FROM PUBLIC VIEW. A DOJO IS PERFECT.

WE'RE SET UP FOR GAMBLING, CAN'T YOU TELL?

YOU PLANNED THIS FROM THE START.

YOU...

BEST, IF THE POLICE COME SNIFFING, I CAN DUMP THE PLACE...
...AT A VERY TIDY PROFIT!

A SHAME TO WASTE ON SWORD-FIGHTING. NOT WHEN IT CAN EARN!

IT REQUIRED NO THOUGHT. A HUGE PROPERTY, A PRIME LOCATION...



"SWORD-ARTS" IS SO...BEHIND THE TIMES.

"CIVILIZATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT..." THAT IS MEIJI.



AS YOU LIKE.

YOU...

...ARE SCUM.



KAORU!

UMPH.

YAHIKO!

DON'T MAKE ME KILL YOU!

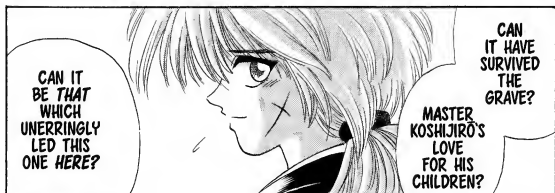


WHOA, HORSEY.

GIVE BACK OUR SISTER!









**KILL
HIM
!!!**



YAHIKO!!



**THE
SWORD
YOUR
FATHER
NAMED
NO. 1...**

**WATCH
CLOSELY
!!**



READ
THIS
WAY





DON'T
GO
THAT
FAR...

SWOOP

THERE
ISN'T
ANYONE
DEAD
HERE.



ONLY
THREE
SWINGS.

GLP

NINE
KILLED
TOTAL...
IN
THREE
SWINGS.



?!

THAT
SWORD!!
WHAT
...?!



S
H
H
K
K

H
I
T
O
K
I
R
I
B
A
T
T
O
S
A
I
!



BECAUSE
HE
CHOOSES
SO.

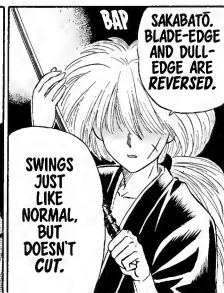
DOWN

THO'...



BUT
WHY
WOULD
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI
...?

SO YOU
CAN'T
KILL
WITH
IT.



BAP

SAKABATŌ.
BLADE-EDGE
AND DULL-
EDGE ARE
REVERSED.

SWINGS
JUST
LIKE
NORMAL,
BUT
DOESN'T
CUT.





SO!

HE'S TOO
FAST...
TOO FAR
ABOVE
ME...

NO-O-O
...



DO NOT
SPEAK
THAT NAME
AGAIN.

YOU
DEFILE
IT IN THE
SPEAKING.



FOR
THE LAST
TIME, LEAVE
THIS
FAMILY.

RNG

THE
TABLES
TURN!

KEEP YOUR
SWORD!
YOU'RE
STILL NO
MATCH FOR
THIS!!

A
GUN!!

HOW
ABOUT
THIS?!!

WAAH





UWAAAH!!



YOUR
EYES,
THE
ANGLE
OF THE
GUN...



I SEE
THE
BULLET'S
PATH!!



YES?

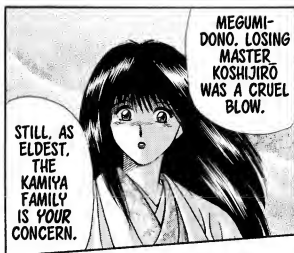
NEVER
APPROACH
THIS
FAMILY
AGAIN.



THREE
CHANCES,
SAYS THE
BUDDHA.



!!







THIS
ONE IS BUT
RUROUNI, A
WANDERER.

THERE
ARE
STILL
...

...PLACES
TO
WANDER
TO.



BECAUSE
HE
CHOOSES
SO.

.....

NO
NAME.
JUST...

RUROUNI.

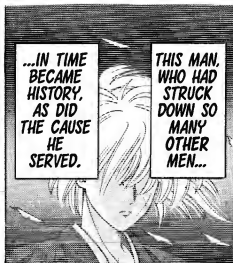
SO
YOU
CAN'T
KILL
WITH
IT.
BUT
WHY
WOULD
HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI
...

NO...

...HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI
...

K
K
L
U
N
K

K
L
A
K



...IN TIME
BECAME
HISTORY,
AS DID
THE CAUSE
HE
SERVED.

THIS MAN,
WHO HAD
STRUCK
DOWN SO
MANY
OTHER
MEN...



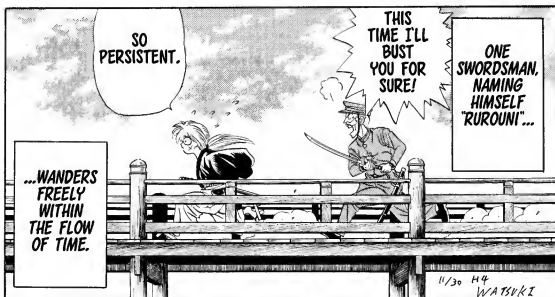
THERE
LIVED A
WARRIOR-
PATRIOT
CALLED
"HITOKIRI
BATTŌSAI."

LONG
AGO, IN
KYOTO
DURING
THE
BAKUMATSU
...



IN
TOKYO
...

BUT
NOW, IN
THE 10TH
YEAR OF
MEIJI...



SO
PERSISTENT.

THIS
TIME I'LL
BUST
YOU FOR
SURE!

ONE
SWORDSMAN,
NAMING
HIMSELF
"RUROUNI"...

...WANDERS
FREELY
WITHIN
THE FLOW
OF TIME.

11/30 H4
WATSKI



NOW THAT
YOU MENTION
IT...

He'd be
at LEAST
30...

OOH!

BUT
WAIT--IF
HE WERE
FATHER'S
CONTEMPORARY
...

RUROUNI • END

GLOSSARY of the RESTORATION

A brief guide to select Japanese terms used in *Rurouni Kenshin*. Note that, both here and within the story itself, all names are Japanese style—i.e., last or “family” name first, with personal or “given” name following. This is both because *Kenshin* is a “period” story, as well as to decrease confusion—were we to take the example of *Kenshin’s* sakabatō and “reverse” the format of the historically established assassin-name “Hitokiri Battōsai,” for example, it would make little sense to then call him “Battōsai Himura.”

hitokiri

An assassin. Famous swordsmen of the period were sometimes thus known to adopt “professional” names—*Kawakami Gensai*, for example, was also known as “Hitokiri Gensai”

Ishin Shishi

Loyalist or pro-Imperialist *patriots* who fought to restore the Emperor to his ancient seat of power

Jigen-ryū

Aggressive swordsmanship style, characterized by one-handed draws/cuts, and the use of turning. Used in this story by Ujiki, a corrupt officer of the Police Sword Corps

Kamiya Kasshin-ryū

Sword-arts or *kenjutsu* school established by Kaoru’s father, who rejected the ethics of *Satsujin-ken* for *Katsujin-ken*

kanji

Japanese system of writing, based on Chinese characters

Katsujin-ken

“Swords that give life”; the sword-arts style developed over ten years by Kaoru’s father and founding principle of *Kamiya Kasshin-ryū*

Kawakami Gensai

Real-life, historical inspiration for the character of *Himura Kenshin*

kenjutsu

The art of fencing; sword arts; *kendō*

Kenshin-gumi

Literally, “group of Kenshin”—translated (rather playfully) for our purposes as “Team Kenshin”

Kiheitai

Fighting force which included men of both the merchant and peasant classes

Aizu

Tokugawa-affiliated domain; fourth battle of the *Boshin War*

Bakumatsu

Final, chaotic days of the Tokugawa regime

Boshin War

Civil war of 1868-69 between the new government and the *Tokugawa Bakufu*. The anti-*Bakufu*, pro-Imperial side (the Imperial Army) won, easily defeating the Tokugawa supporters

-chan

Honorific. Can be used either as a diminutive (e.g., with a small child—“Little Hanako or Kentarō”), or with those who are grown, to indicate affection (“My dear...”)

dojo

Martial arts training hall

-dono

Honorific. Even more respectful than *-san*; the effect in modern-day Japanese conversation would be along the lines of “Milord So-and-So.” As used by *Kenshin*, it indicates both respect and humility

Edo

Capital city of the *Tokugawa Bakufu*; renamed *Tokyo* (“Eastern Capital”) after the Meiji Restoration

Hijikata Toshizō

Vice-commander of the *Shinsengumi*

Himura Battōsai

Swordsmen of legendary skills and former assassin (*hitokiri*) of the *Ishin Shishi*

Himura Kenshin

Kenshin’s “real” name, revealed to Kaoru only at her urging

Hiten Mitsurugi-ryū

Kenshin’s sword technique, used more for defense than offense. An “ancient style that pits one against many,” it requires exceptional speed and agility to master

Seinan War

1877 uprising of the samurai classes against the new Meiji government, ending in defeat by the government army. Also known as the "Satsuma Rebellion"

Seishû, Hanaoka

Real-world Japanese physician (1760-1835) whose use of "tsusensan" in 1805 during an operation for breast cancer pioneered the use of surgical anesthesia

sensei

Teacher; master

Shinsengumi

Elite, notorious, government-sanctioned and exceptionally skilled swordsman-supporters of the military government (*Bakufu*) which had ruled Japan for nearly 250 years, the Shinsengumi ("newly selected corps") were established in 1863 to suppress the *loyalists* and restore law and order to the blood-soaked streets of the imperial capital (see *Kyoto*)

shôgun

Feudal military ruler of Japan

shôgunate

See *Tokugawa Bakufu*

suntetsu

Small, handheld blade, designed for palming and concealment

Tokugawa Bakufu

Military feudal government which dominated Japan from 1603 to 1867

Tokugawa Yoshinobu

15th and last *shôgun* of Japan. His peaceful abdication in 1867 marked the end of the *Bakufu* and beginning of *Meiji*

Tokyo

The renaming of "Edo" to "Tokyo" is a marker of the start of the *Meiji Restoration*

Toba Fushimi, Battle at

Battle near *Kyoto* between the forces of the new, imperial government and the fallen *shôgunate*. Ending with an imperial victory, it was the first battle of the *Boshin War*

yakuza

Japanese underworld; "the mob." Known (as in other times, and other countries) both by their colorful garb and equally colorful speech

Yamagata Aritomo

(1838-1922) Soldier and statesman, chief founder of the modern Japanese army. A samurai of Chôshû, he studied military science in Europe and returned to Japan in 1870 to head the war ministry

-kun

Honorific. Used in the modern day among male students, or those who grew up together, but another usage—the one you're more likely to find in *Rurouni Kenshin*—is the "superior-to-inferior" form, intended as a way to emphasize a difference in status or rank, as well as to indicate familiarity or affection

Kyoto

Home of the Emperor and imperial court from A.D. 794 until shortly after the Meiji Restoration in 1868

loyalists

Those who supported the return of the Emperor to power, *Ishin Shishi*

Meiji Restoration

1853-1868; culminated in the collapse of the *Tokugawa Bakufu* and the restoration of imperial rule. So called after Emperor Meiji, whose chosen name was written with the characters for "culture and enlightenment"

ohagi

Traditional Japanese autumnal treat. Named after "hagi," bush clover, which flowers in the fall. Said to be especially delicious with *matcha* or green tea

okashira

Literally, "the head"; i.e., leader, boss

oniwabanshû

Elite group of *onmitsu* or "spies" of the *Edo* period, now known as "ninja" or "shinobi"

patriots

Another term for *Ishin Shishi*...and when used by Sano, not a flattering one

rurouni

Wanderer, vagabond

sakabatô

Reversed-edge sword (the dull edge on the side the sharp should be, and vice-versa); carried by Kenshin as a symbol of his resolution never to kill again

-san

Honorific. Carries the meaning of "Mr.," "Ms.," "Miss," etc., but used more extensively in Japanese than its English equivalent (note that even an enemy may be addressed as "-san")

Satsujin-ken

"Swords that give death"; a style of swordsmanship rejected by Kaoru's father